

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-10
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FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9965

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 12636

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, KE

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION

1. EMBASSY INFORMED TODAY BY RELIABLE AMERICAN JOURNALISTS THAT IN CONVERSATION WITH THEM YESTERDAY ATTORNEY GENERAL NJONJO SAID THAT A KANU CONFERENCE WOULD BE HELD TO CHOOSE THE PARTY'S CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT AND THAT THERE WOULD BE BUT ONE CANDIDATE.

2. THERE HAS BEEN SPECULATION IN NAIROBI(PARTICULARLY AT UK HIGH COMMISSION) THAT KANU MIGHT ENDORSE MORE THAN ONE CANDIDATE, WHICH SEEMED TO BE PERMISSIBLE UNDER RATHER AMBIGUOUS WORDING OF CHAPTER II, SECTION 5.(5) OF THE KENYA CONSTITUTION WHICH STIPULATES THAT "(A) EVERY CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT SHALL BE NOMINATED BY A POLITICAL PARTY....," BUT DOES NOT SPECIFY THAT PARTIES MAY ONLY NOMINATE ONE CANDIDATE. ATTORNEY GENERAL'S STATEMENT WOULD IMPLY DECISION (ATTORNEY GENERAL IS LAST WORD ON CONSTITUTION IN KENYA) TO RESTRICT NOMINATION TO ONE CANDIDATE.

3. THERE HAVE BEEN NO SECURITY PROBLEMS AT ALL SINCE KENYATTA'S DEATH AND MAIN POLITICAL ACTORS SEEM RELAXED AND UNWORRIED. AT NOON TODAY ATTORNEY GENERAL AND MINISTER FOR FINANCE AND PLANNING KIBAKI, TWO OF THE THREE PRINCIPALS
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ON THE MOI TEEM, DROVE UP AND PARKED IN FRONT OF EMBASSY BUILDING UNACCOMPANIED BY ANY SECURITY PERSONNEL. THEY THEN WALKED THROUGH THE CROWDED STREET TO NEARBY RESTAURANT WHERE THEY ATE IN PUBLIC DINING ROOM TOGETHER WITH PERMANENT SECRETARY IN PRESIDENT'S OFFICE, GEOFFREY KARIITHI. OBVIOUSLY, IF THESE PEOPLE FELT THREATENED THEY WOULD HAVE PROVIDED THEMSELVES WITH SECURITY AGENTS. THEIR ATTITUDE MAKES IT

CLEAR THAT THOSE IN POWER BELIEVE THAT SITUATION IS UNDER
CONTROL.
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